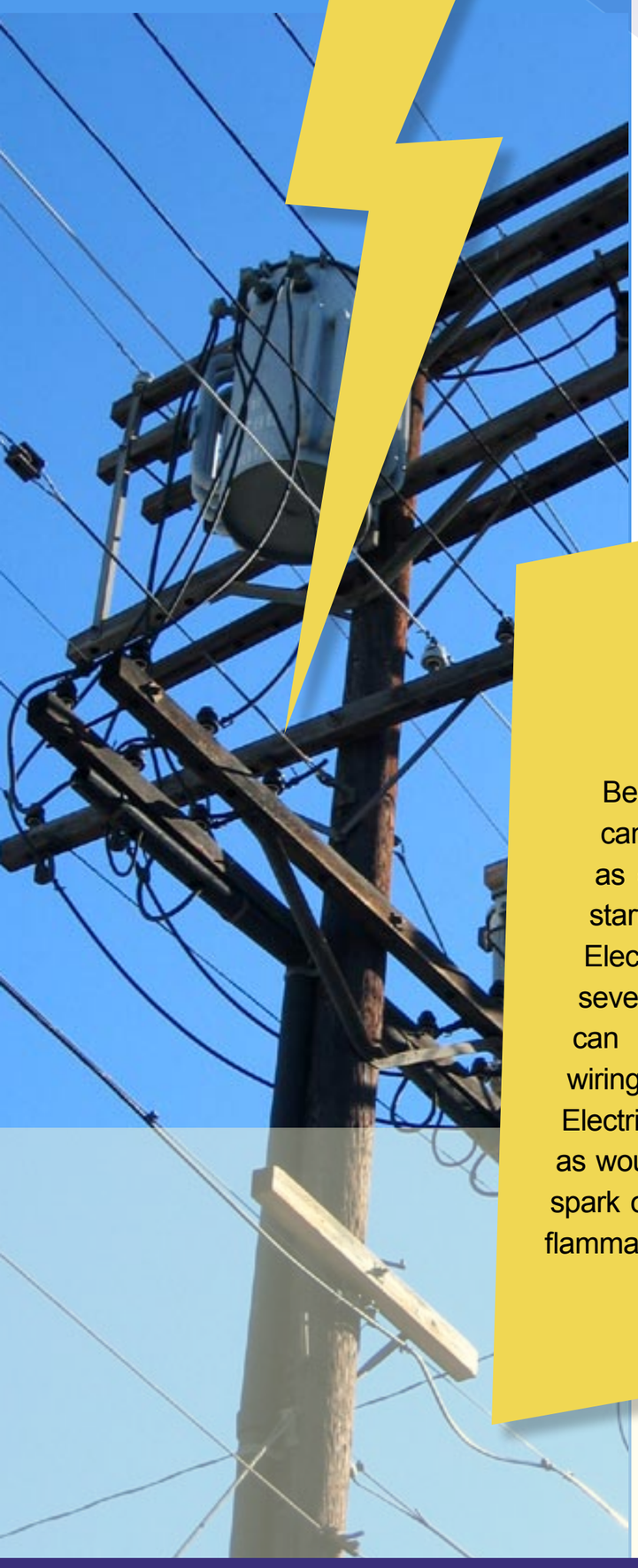
Electrical Hazards

HIGH VOLTAGE

Watch for overhead lines

- Be particularly wary when operating heavy equipment around power lines. Maintain safe minimum distances from all power lines.
- Don't erect scaffolding or operate machinery too close to power lines.
- If safe clearances cannot be maintained, contact the authorities to have the lines de-energized, guarded or temporarily re-routed.



9 GOOD WAYS TO AVOID SHOCK

- Always make sure all electrical equipment you use is in good repair. Report any problems so the equipment can be repaired or replaced.
- Never undertake repairs on electrical equipment unless you are both authorized and qualified to do so. Fatal accidents have been caused by poorly repaired equipment.
- Use only correctly grounded equipment. Never use a three-pronged cord that has had its third prong broken off. Make sure grounding connections are secure.
- Watch for wires and connections that are damaged, worn or broken.
- Use a Ground Fault Circuit Interrupter (GFCI) when using electrical equipment outdoors or in a damp area. Do not use electrical equipment that is damp or that may have been submerged in water. Do not handle any electrical equipment, including cords and plugs, with wet hands.
- When unplugging a cord, pull on the plug rather than the cord.
- Never use a ladder made of aluminum or one with metal reinforcement when doing any electrical work. This includes changing a light bulb.
- Determine if there are any overhead hazards such as power lines and electrical installations. Take precautions. Don't bring objects such as ladders in contact with them.
- Don't ever use water on an electrical fire. Use only an extinguisher designed specifically for electrical fires. Know where to locate and how to use this extinguisher in your workplace.

DID YOU KNOW?

Besides electrical shock, electricity can also create other hazards, such as causing a worker who has been startled by a shock to fall from a ladder. Electricity causes burns, including severe internal burns. Electricity can cause fires when circuits or wiring are overloaded or overheated. Electricity also can cause explosions, as would be the case if an electrical spark occurred in the presence of a flammable vapor, gas or dust.

3 safety strategies

1. Never work on a switch or outlet connected to a live (closed) circuit. First, turn off the circuit breaker and put a lock and warning sign on the breaker.

2. When you are making adjustments to portable powered equipment, disconnect it, but keep the cord in your sight so someone else can't plug it in and give you a shock. Better yet, use a locking device of portable tools and equipment to prevent anyone else from plugging it in.

3. Before you do maintenance or repairs on electrically powered equipment, you need to isolate the power source. Lock out and tag out switches when repairing equipment. That's why there are slots for locks on electrical circuit breakers. This procedure prevents the equipment from starting up and injuring you. Follow all of your employer's safety procedures for locking out equipment.

FACT or FICTION?

FICTION: Ordinary household or shop current isn't all that dangerous.

FACT: Whether the electrical shock comes from an overhead transmission line or an incorrectly grounded power tool, the results can be equally fatal.

Poster #P4440 www.SafetySmart.com

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